

SENIOR & DISABLED TRANSIT PLAN



2006 Traffic Relief & Safety Plan for Solano County

The Solano Transportation Improvement Authority (STIA) was formed by the Solano County Board of Supervisors to develop a Traffic Relief and Safety Plan for a county-wide, 30-year, half-cent, local sales tax measure as a way to obtain local, flexible funding to relieve traffic congestion and improve mobility and safety in Solano County.

The Traffic Relief and Safety Plan (Plan) currently being developed is expected to provide over \$1.5 billion in funding for the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange Project, corridor improvements, local streets and roads, express bus service, commuter rail service, senior and disabled transit service, local return-to-source, and safety projects.

While the current population of Solano County is young compared to the rest of the Bay Area, the percentage over 65 is expected to grow faster than any other Bay Area county. Moreover, among this older population, the proportion of those with drivers licenses drops significantly. Given the auto dependence in Solano County, these statistics indicate a substantial lack of mobility among the older population. This is also true of people with disabilities and others who are dependent on the transit network in the county.

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) recently completed the Solano County Senior

and Disabled Transit Study that analyzes transportation limitations faced by seniors and the disabled and recommends strategies to address these serious gaps (see the reverse side for examples). No funding is currently available to implement these recommendations and the focus is now on raising the needed monies through the Traffic Safety and Relief Plan's proposed half-cent sales tax.

Requirements of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA requires transit operators to provide comparable service to those unable to use

fixed route transit services. Under the ADA, transit operators must provide comparable services as measured in terms of six criteria:

- Service area
- Response time
- Fares
- Service days and hours
- Meet request for any trip purpose
- No service limitations because of capacity constraints

Due to the high cost of providing this specialized door-to-door service, many transit operators restrict use to those unable to use fixed route services. For longer distance trips, transfers from door-to-door onto fixed route services are often required. Additional local funds are critical to overcome the transportation limits for seniors and the disabled.

Commuter Transit & Highway Improvements Provide Additional Benefits

By improving local roadway, highway and safety conditions, the Traffic Relief and Safety Plan will provide more efficient transit services for commuters, seniors and disabled persons. Many of the strategies recommended in the Solano County Senior and Disabled Transit Study include leveraging current and future services to better serve the growing population dependent on the County's transit network. Improvements to safety, increased emergency vehicle access and more efficient fixed-route bus service identified in the Plan will reduce congestion and increase mobility, freeing resources to better serve seniors and the disabled with limited transportation options.



Strategies to Improve Senior and Disabled Transit

The STA considers the mobility needs of the growing senior and disabled population a priority. While there are some limited transportation services available, service gaps remain due to changes in traffic conditions, limitations on fixed-route service, program constraints, and eligibility limitations.

The Solano County Senior and Disabled Transit Study recommends short-term, medium-term and long-term strategies as follows:

Short-Term Strategies

- Expand fixed route driver sensitivity training and retraining for senior and disabled services
- Improve dissemination of bus schedules
- Identify opportunities for freeing up paratransit capacity
- Develop procedures for same-day medical return trips
- Train social service staff on paratransit limits and application preparation
- Develop guidelines to ensure transit-oriented development and better access for seniors and the disabled
- Promote deliveries from markets and pharmacies
- Develop casual carpool programs for seniors and the disabled to share trips

Medium-Term Strategies

- Include more low-floor buses in future fixed route fleet expansions
- Improve timed transfers between regional and local services
- Expand local service to connect Dixon and Vacaville
- Expand paratransit services
- Develop feeder services from paratransit to core fixed routes
- Evaluate and improve intercounty paratransit service
- Provide partial subsidy of paratransit fares for low-income users
- Create shopper shuttles
- Create new volunteer driver programs
- Provide fixed route travel training for seniors and the disabled

- Provide free mid-day fixed-route fares on local service for seniors and the disabled
- Establish evening/weekend subsidized taxi service
- Establish a travel information clearinghouse

Long-Term Strategies

- Improve headways on Route 30 to Sacramento
- Establish Sunday transit and paratransit service
- Convert some paratransit to flex-route service
- Establish service from Rio Vista to Pittsburg BART
- Create Older Driver Wellness programs



The Traffic Relief and Safety Plan will raise much needed funds to improve senior and disabled transit services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jayne Bauer, Project Manager, Solano Transportation Authority,

One Harbor Center, Suite 130, Suisun City, CA 94585 • Phone: (707) 424.6075 • Email: jbauer@sta-snci.com

www.solanolinks.com/stia